

REMARKS

Applicants reply to the Office Action dated September 19, 2008 within the shortened statutory three month period for reply. Claims 17-23 were pending in the application and the Examiner rejects claims 17-23. Support for the amendments may be found in the originally-filed specification, claims, and figures. No new matter has been introduced by these amendments. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejects claims 17-21 under 35 USC 112 as failing to comply with the written description requirement. In particular, the Examiner asserts that the newly added limitations of “energized time”, “predetermined lifetime”, “energized state”, “ON state”, “three-terminal”, “conduction state” (although it says “conclusion state” on page 2 of the present Office Action, we believe it is a typographical error and the Examiner intends to refer to “conduction state” as recited in the pending claims), “arranged in parallel” are not supported by the specification.

Applicants note the corresponding method claim 22 and 23 are not rejected by the Examiner in the present Office Action. However, the rejected limitations, in particular, “energized time”, “predetermined lifetime”, “ON state”, and “energized state”, are also recited in claims 22 and 23. As such, to avoid possible feature support or written description rejections, in addition to amending claims 17-21, Applicants also amend claims 22 and 23, as discussed in detail below. Applicants amendments bring the claims in compliance with the written description requirement and are supported by the specification as follows.

First, regarding the Examiner’s rejection for the recitation “predetermined lifetime”, Applicants respectfully disagree. For example, page 23, lines 7-10 of the specification describe that “each of the MOS transistors 410 to 413 deteriorates after different predetermined periods of time (e.g., a break-down of a gate oxide film of the MOS transistor occurs), and do not function as the MOS transistor any more”. Applicants assert that it is apparent from such description that the claimed transistor has a predetermined lifetime, i.e., after a predetermined period of time, and the transistor does not function as a transistor any more. Therefore, the Examiner’s rejection for the recitation “predetermined lifetime” should be withdrawn.

Second, regarding the recitations “energized time” and “energized state”, Applicants remove such recitations from the claims. Therefore, the Examiner’s rejections for such recitations have been rendered moot.

Third, regarding the recitation “ON state”, Applicants amend claim 17 to recite, “when a main power of is supplied to the television device is at an ON state, the transistor is energized in an ON state”, which specifies that the claimed “ON state” is a state of the claimed transistor, rather than a state of the claimed television device. Support for such amendments can be found at, for example, page 22, lines 23-29 of the specification, which describes “when power is supplied to the TV 74 ... currents flow through the sources and drains of the MOS transistors 410 to 413”. Applicants also assert that it is well known to one skilled in the art that the ON state of a transistor refers to the state of the transistor when current flows between the source and the drain of the transistor. Therefore, the amended claim language meets the written description requirement and is supported by the specification.

Fourth, regarding the amended recitation, “the recording device means is configured to record information indicating a total time that the transistor is in the ON state for estimating a lifetime of the television device”, support for such amendments can be found at, for example, page 22, lines 23-29 and page 24, lines 3-6 of the specification. More specifically, it is clear from page 22, lines 23-29 that the total time the power is supplied to the television device (i.e., the total time that current flows into the television device, i.e., the total current-on time of the television device) equals the time the transistor is turned on (i.e., the total time the transistor is in the ON state). Consequently, the information indicating the total current-on time of the television device corresponds to information indicating the total time the transistor is in the ON state. Therefore, the amended recitation, “the recording device means is configured to record information indicating a total time that the transistor is in the ON state for estimating a lifetime of the television device” is supported by the description on, for example, page 24, lines 3-6.

Regarding the recitations “three-terminal” and “conduction state”, such recitations have been removed from the claim language. Therefore, the Examiner’s rejections for such recitations have been rendered moot. Moreover, Applicants amend claim 19 and support for such amendments can be found at, for example, page 22, lines 20-29.

Regarding the recitation “arranged in parallel”, Applicants assert that such recitation, “arranged in parallel”, is clearly derivable from, for example, Fig. 5. More specifically, as clearly illustrated in Fig. 5, the gates of the plurality of transistors 410-413 are all connected to the terminal 415, the sources of the plurality of transistors 410-413 are all connected to the constant-current circuit 414, and the drains of the plurality of transistors 410-413 are all connected to the ground, i.e., the plurality of the transistors 410-413 being arranged in parallel. Therefore, Applicants assert that the recitation, “arranged in parallel”, is supported by the specification. The Examiner’s rejection should be withdrawn.

In view of the discussion above, Applicants assert that the amended claims are supported by the specification and comply with the written description requirement. Therefore, the Examiner’s written description rejections should be withdrawn.

The Examiner next rejects claims 17-23 under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious over St. John (US 2001/0056349 A1), and further in view of Rousseau (US 2002/0001001). Applicants respectfully disagree, but Applicants amend the claims to expedite prosecution.

More specifically, the Examiner states that he does not take into consideration the intended technical meaning of the certain limitations. As stated on page 3 of the present Office Action, since the Examiner considers the limitations of “energized time”, “predetermined time”, “energized state”, “ON state”, “three-terminal”, “conduction state”, “arranged in parallel” as not supported by the specification, for purpose of applying prior art, the Examiner interprets the phrases as not being meaningful such that an opinion could be formed.

Applicants assert that the amended claims are supported by the specification and comply with the written description requirement, so Applicants assert that the presently claimed invention is inventive over St. John and Rousseau.

As recited in amended claim 17, the claimed television device includes a recording device means, which further includes a transistor. In contrast, St. John describes a television (i.e., device 3762-2) and a video cassette recorder (i.e., device 3762-1) included in a subscription television system (paragraphs [0378] and [0389] of St. John; although it says paragraph 39 on page 3 of the Office Action, Applicants believe this is a typographical error and the Examiner

intends to refer to paragraph 389 instead) and transistors Q1, Q2 and Q3 included in a circuit of a bio-monitor included in a speech recognition system (paragraphs [0234] and [0238]-[0241] of St. John), which is a system separated from the subscription television system and operates independently from the subscription television system. Accordingly, the television and the transistors of St. John cannot operate as the claimed television device and the claimed transistor as specified in the amended claim (i.e., when a power is supplied to the claimed television device, the claimed transistor is turned on and in an ON state). Furthermore, the video cassette recorder of St. John is incapable of recording information indicating a total time that the transistor is in the ON state, in contrast to the claimed recording device.

Regarding Rousseau, the Examiner asserts that Rousseau discloses estimating a lifetime of a television device (see abstract, and claim 13 of Rousseau). However, Applicants assert that Rousseau merely describes that a cartridge life status assembly determines when the useful life of the cartridge has been exhausted (see abstract of Rousseau). Rousseau does not include any disclosure regarding estimating a lifetime of a television device. Furthermore, Rousseau does not make up for the deficiencies of St. John, as discussed above. Therefore, neither St. John, Rousseau, nor any combination thereof, could obtain information indicating a total time that the transistor is in the ON state, which can be further used for estimating a lifetime of the television device. As a result, the presently claimed invention achieves technical effect not achievable by St. John or Rousseau or the combination thereof.

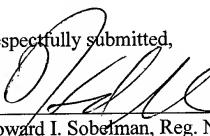
More specifically, Applicants assert that neither St. John, Rousseau, nor any combination thereof, disclose “when a power is supplied to the television device, the transistor is in an ON state,” or “the recording device means is configured to record information indicating a total time that the transistor is in the ON state for estimating a lifetime of the television device”, as similarly recited by independent claims 17 and 22.

Dependent claims 18-21 and 23 variously depend from independent claims 17 and 22, so Applicants assert that dependent claims 18-21 and 23 are differentiated from the cited references for the same reasons as set forth above, in addition to their own respective features.

In view of the above remarks and amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims properly set forth that which Applicants regard as their invention and are allowable over the cited references. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the Examiner's convenience, if that would help further prosecution of the subject application. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. **19-2814**.

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Respectfully submitted,

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